



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# THE PHYSIOLOGY OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE—*Concluded*

P. H. J. LERRIGO, M.D.

## VI. THE HEART

*A competent heart.*—"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). There is sound physiological sense in these words of the sage. The integrity of the life-processes is intimately dependent upon the competency of the heart. It is the main central pumping station, supplying the initial impulse to the streams of nutritive fluids which are distributed throughout the system for its support and growth. No man can be thoroughly equal to his life's task, whether in a mental, physical, or spiritual sense, unless this central power station is competent to sustain the steady, uninterrupted flow of energy required. The competency of the individual depends upon the competency of the heart.

*An interesting patient.*—Among the numerous patients visiting the dispensary connected with Emmanuel Hospital in Capiz, P.I., was a young Filipino about eighteen years of age. He took his seat in the consultant's chair, or rather slumped down into it, in a perfectly spineless fashion, and I began the usual list of questions and routine examination. I learned that he was a high-school student, and inquired regarding his progress in the classes. "Oh," he replied, "I just can't do the work required of me." The next question was about his experiences on the playground, for the American missionaries and school

teachers in the Philippines are not only endeavoring to introduce their students to the rudiments of an English education, but have also undertaken the development of their bodies by teaching them American games, such as baseball, basket-ball, and football. "Oh," said he, "I cannot join in those games, they are too difficult for me." He was, evidently, a discouraging case; and the next question dealt with the work upon his father's *hacienda*, whence he had recently come. Again he replied, "The farm work is too hard for me; I can't do it."

*Symptoms of incompetency.*—Now it would have been perfectly possible to make an accurate diagnosis in the young man's case without any further investigation, but following the routine course the cardinal symptoms of his trouble were successively elicited. His extremities were found to be cold; his fingernails and lips were of a bluish tinge, and auscultation of the chest revealed a decided heart murmur. The young man was suffering from an incompetent heart, and its incompetency affected every act of his life, rendering him unfit to compete with his fellows in study, sport, or work.

*Pushed to the wall.*—The individual with an incompetent heart is at a tremendous disadvantage in the world. He must carry the ordinary burdens of

life and meet its daily duties while feeling within himself an inadequacy for the task, knowing always that his strength is just a little below that which the occasion requires. The world has no place for incompetency of any kind and the incompetent individual is pushed pitilessly to the wall.

*The heart in common speech.*—The fundamental relationship which the heart bears to the normal manifestation of life's activities is shown by the manner in which the word has crept into the vocabulary of common speech, leading to its application to all manner of situations of the most diverse character. We speak of a "hearty" welcome, implying that there is nothing feigned or artificial about the reception accorded the newcomer. We say about the person who manifests a disrelish for his daily work that "his heart is not in it," and thus indicate that the product will be faulty. The root idea is found in the word "courage," for it is hard to be brave with a failing heart. In colloquial speech we sometimes hear the individual whose health is robust spoken of as "hearty," which thus becomes the synonym for healthy.

*From the heart.*—The heart governs word as well as deed. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34). David said, "My heart is inditing a good matter" (Ps. 45:1). He sat down to write a letter and it was his heart which spoke upon the written page, voicing the warm sympathy of his soul. Many a letter is written from the head and is coldly intellectual, or occasionally it is dictated by the spleen and is biting sarcasm, but here was a letter which wholly suited

the case, for it expressed the sentiments of the heart.

*The heart in the Scripture.*—The Scripture has a great deal to say about the heart, and vigor of the spiritual life is always associated with its healthy functioning. Acceptable service is afforded from "a perfect heart" (I Chron. 28:9). "Mine iniquities are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me" (Ps. 40:12). "They lied with their tongue, for their heart was not right" (Ps. 78:36-37). "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right" (Acts 8:21). One's relationship to God is governed by the heart. "Ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall seek for me with all your heart."

*Half-hearted Christians.*—Few spectacles in the world are so pitiable as that of the half-hearted Christian; the man to whose soul the spiritual message has come, who has caught a glimpse of the radiant joys of "life in Christ Jesus," but who has found it impossible to yield that whole-hearted response which carries with it a dedication of the entire being, spirit, soul, and body, to the service of the Master.

*Cardiac insufficiency in the spiritual life.*—The imperfect response is all too common among Christians today. It would be invidious, perhaps inaccurate, to say that life is not present in such cases. There has been a feeble answer to the call of God, and in response to the rudimentary desire the life of Christ has been imparted; but far from presenting the glow of spiritual health, the new-made Christian has but a precarious hold upon existence; his life's functions are but imperfectly

performed, and his activities are of a sluggish and feeble character. He is suffering from cardiac insufficiency and the basis of his trouble is a failure to yield a whole-hearted allegiance to the Master. He is spiritually defective, and instead of taking his place gladly in the forefront of life's battle, he must occupy the invalid's couch in the Christian home. The flood of life runs so feebly in his veins that his chief concern will be the conserving of his own ebbing vitality and no power will be left for an effort on behalf of others. He avoids vigorous exercise and strenuous emotions; others must carry his burden and minister to the weakness of his life; and his Christian experience is a pale, anemic thing which gives little satisfaction to his own soul and commands no respect from others.

*Examining the inner life.*—Introspection may become a vice if the habit of constantly scrutinizing the inner experience is formed; but it is well in this matter-of-fact world occasionally to give one's self a spiritual examination, just as the prudent individual places himself at times in the hands of his physician for a scrutiny of his physical condition.

*The possibility of a vital lesion.*—The spiritual examination of the heart may be made upon very similar lines to those which would characterize a physical examination. We want to know whether we are organically sound, and whether the heart of our soul, having received the full tides of life from above, is capable of imparting the impulse which will send the streams of vital fluid pulsating throughout the system. If a vital lesion exists at the very center

of our spiritual being, we shall know it by the symptoms manifested. There will be a coldness in the reactions between our spiritual selves and the lives of others; there will be a dull depression of spirit, a discouragement of soul leading us to feel our incompetency to impart any spiritual gift to another; there will be a pessimistic outlook upon life, manifesting itself in murmurings and complainings; and there will be a reluctance to join in the activities of the spiritual life which render more robust souls a blessing and enrichment to the life of the world. Every church roll is laden with the names of cyanosed babies of the spiritual life. In fact, the average church membership list might well be spoken of as "the cradle roll," so predominant a proportion of it is composed of those who are still babes in Christ—babes who have never grown and whose spiritual appearance indicates the imperfect functioning of a defective heart.

*Pedro's request.*—Happily, however, in the spiritual world, there is a remedy for the incompetent heart. I recollect a young boy about fourteen years of age, who was admitted to our hospital in Capiz, P.I., suffering from an advanced case of cardiac insufficiency. Poor Pedro remained with us a month or more, and while we were able, in some measure, to relieve his symptoms, the root of the difficulty was beyond any human power, and eventually we had to say to Pedro that we could do nothing more for him. During his residence with us the little fellow had become quite attached to the hospital and the friends he had formed there, and was deeply affected upon learning that his case was hopeless and that he must

leave us. Many a time he had seen patients who were to be operated upon wheeled from the anaesthetizing room to the operating room, and observing that they went into the room in a profound sleep and came out again to ultimately restored vigor, he said to me, "Could you not put me to sleep, as you have so many others, and then mend my heart and put it back?" In the process of time and progress of the science of surgery we may be able to do just that, but to Pedro we could only give one reply, and that a sorrowfully negative one.

*A miracle of healing.*—But while Pedro's heart was incapable of being mended, a miracle of another kind had been wrought upon him, for he had learned of Him who said, "My son, give Me thine heart" (Prov. 23:26), and to him the promise had been fulfilled, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 11:19).

*The remedy for the defective heart.*—Let us determine within ourselves that a cold, unsatisfactory Christian life with a joyless, pessimistic outlook is unworthy of the one who should be "a new creature of Christ Jesus"; that a life of spineless impotency is unbecoming to the follower of the Master; and let us look for that remedy for the defective heart which is within our reach, when we will "search for it with all our hearts."

*The power of a competent soul.*—The inner change will entirely transform our outer experience. The "united heart" will so vitalize the system that living becomes a joy. The power of a competent soul receiving its strength from God will revivify the circulation until the

effete products of spiritual stagnation are swept from the entire being, and the whole nature, cleansed and purified by the life-giving flow, will respond vigorously to the new impulses of life. The spiritual tissues, nourished and built up as never before, will engage in spiritual activities which become the expression of the renewed inner life, and the "competency" of the very life of the Master Himself will become apparent to all the world in us.

*Churches with incompetent hearts.*—There are churches which suffer from cardiac insufficiency, as well as individuals; and the symptoms presented by them are not dissimilar from those found in the analogous physical condition. When one enters a church of this kind, instead of meeting that atmosphere of cordial welcome which should make the outsider feel that the church has something worth while to offer him, one is impressed with the chilliness of the environment and the indifference of the assembled worshipers to the presence of the chance stranger. In other words, the "cold shoulder" is turned. The church manifests cold extremities, a symptom of defective heart action; for when the center of the church life is in warm, living touch with the Master of life, there will be found inevitably the ready welcome, the quiet word of sympathy, and a greeting which will impress the visitor with the feeling that the currents of life run so warmly and rapidly that there is abundant affection left over to lavish on the occasional guest.

*The "blueness" of incompetency.*—The cyanotic appearance of the serious heart case is also manifest in the incompetent church. The feelings of the

membership assume an indigo tint. They are discouraged from a conviction, acknowledged or not, that the church is failing to meet the requirements of the situation; incompetent to grapple with the serious task of revitalizing its community. A normal, healthy growth is absent; there is no touch with the need of the mass of unheeding life about them; nor is there any vital and significant impact upon the farther fields of missionary effort which challenge the entire competency of the best life of the church.

*Trifling with a world-task.*—Many and many a church today is trifling with the serious task which the Master has committed to His followers. Such a church has lost its touch with the world-situation. It has been left behind in a side eddy of the great current of modern life. The pastor of a certain city church in a thriving manufacturing center, which has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years from a rural town to its present position of metropolitan predominance, complained that his church still preserved the standards and traditions of its bygone rural days. While the people had been swept along by the growth of the community in their business, adapting their social life, educational equipment, and political development to it, the church had retained its rural conception; and the traditions of little beginnings still cramped and crippled what ought to have been a thriving spiritual enterprise. Its members were content to hold little meetings for the spiritual edification of a little group of little, stunted souls, instead of realizing that the growth of the city and the development of business and social life about them was a challenge to the

best that was in them to bring to bear the vigor of their own spiritual power upon the lush growth of rank weeds, with which civic development had surrounded them.

*Competency in a needy world.*—It is vital that the church preserve a competent heart in the midst of the pressing problems of the day. It should permeate every department of the community life and claim it for Christ. The thriving pulses of the church's life should be felt throughout the city, its regenerating tides ever ready to cleanse, heal, and purify. But if the church is to exert this sane and wholesome influence upon the life about it, there must be channels uniting it with its nearer and farther environment. Many a church has surrounded itself with an insulating wall which cuts it off from the mass of life about it. It is like the encysted amoeba.

*The separating wall.*—Yes, the church needs a wall, for the Master said, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing," and there must needs be a line of demarcation between those who belong to the world and those who belong to God; but there are many churches which have overdone the fencing business and have conceived that church membership was for the purpose of making a well-lined nest for themselves and theirs within protecting and separating walls.

*Gates in our fences.*—But the correlative truth is that we should learn to cut wide gates through our fences and place illuminated welcome signs above them, so that the broad highways without may connect with the ramifying channels

within, and together form a circulating system whereby the life-giving powers within the heart of the church may not merely be conveyed to the needy spots of its immediate environment, but may also influence the very uttermost parts of the world. A significant statement was made by a Maine pastor, who said that his ambition was "to relate the life of his own local church to the present world-situation."

*The remedy for incompetence in church life.*—Serious diseases sometimes require drastic remedies. The remedy for incompetency in church life today is being found in many and many a case in the revitalizing of its individual members by a determined co-operative effort to grapple with the task which the feebleness and indifference of past days had left unfulfilled. The church is rediscovering the principle of co-operation, or team work. Its application to finance in the Every Member Canvass has revolutionized the whole field of church

economics and brought about a new realization of vigor and competence. Its application to the spiritual life of the membership in the Fellowship Visitation has brought a new realization of the value of church membership and all the church stands for, while in the new methods of gospel team work we have a revival of the personal service which in the early years of the church's history led to the rapid spread of the gospel throughout the known world.

*Union with the Master's heart.*—Ingenuous methods of team work alone, however, will never produce a condition of competency in the church life. There must be, in addition, a new and vital reunion with the throbbing heart of the Master, that our hearts may learn to beat in unison with His; that our churches may be infused with the streams of His life's current; and that the world may thus be touched and blessed with the healing flood which flows for the life of the world.

## VII. THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

*Terminal filaments.*—The skin contains a fine network of millions upon millions of minute nerve filaments, ending in sensitive points which receive the impressions of the outside world. The organs of special sense are merely elaborations of these nerve-endings to serve a specific purpose. Between my neighbor and me is my skin. It is a wall which shuts him out of my inner life, but it is also a recording membrane through which he may communicate with me. It is the medium through which I become aware of my environment.

*Thin-skinned or thick-skinned.*—Some people are impressed more readily than others with stimuli from without, and we speak of individuals as thin-skinned or thick-skinned. One may be abnormal in either direction: so responsive to external conditions as to go through life in a perfect misery of hyperstimulation, insomuch that the spirit within fails to apprehend the relative values of things without and hence cannot justly balance the life within and the life without, but lives in a constantly disturbed condition of maladjustment to environment. Or, on the other hand,

one may be so callous to external impressions and so absorbed with the inner processes of one's own life as to fail to yield a normal response to the draft upon one's inner being through the impact of circumstances passing without. The first individual is a spiritual neurasthenic, who should pray for a normal balance between the world without and the spirit within. The second is the natural-born egoist, who should pray that his organs of perception be sharpened to the need of others.

*A balanced response.*—The healthy individual is neither thick- nor thin-skinned, but uses his organs for the reception of sense-impressions in a normal way to put him into touch with the multiform phenomena of the world without him. There is a balanced response between the impressions received and the thoughts and actions to which they give rise. He is careful not to place too much stress upon the immediate sensation produced by any external circumstance which impinges upon his nerve-endings, for he knows that these sense-organs are merely links in a chain of reaction, and the initial impression, whether agreeable or otherwise, may not at all indicate the final character of the completed nerve-cycle. He trusts the integrity of his nervous mechanism and permits it to work automatically, believing that the principle of life within is greater than the mere machinery of life.

*The nerve-cycle.*—The nerve-train finds only its beginning in the sensitive filaments which ramify through the substance of the integument. These hair-like processes seize upon the vast multitude of impressions presented for their reception. Impressions of heat or cold,

wet or dry, hard or soft; taste impressions of sweet or sour, pungent or insipid; auditory impressions of harmony or discord—all are received in much the same manner and immediately flashed to headquarters for consideration. The cycle of nervous influence is not complete until a response has been elicited. This may come immediately, as when the sensitive nerve-endings of the fingers flash to the brain an impression of excessive heat, in which case the process of cerebation is lightning-like in its rapidity and no time is lost in telegraphing to the arm instructions to withdraw from the proximity of danger.

*A delayed reaction.*—On the other hand, the information carried to the brain may be of a character requiring deliberation, in which case it will be recorded upon one of the brain-cells, and laid away for subsequent consideration. What may be the character of this consideration is not always clear; it may be used in the conscious thought of the individual, or it may lie dormant for years, perhaps never actively impressing the consciousness, but nevertheless playing its part in the great burden of subconscious thinking which is always going on, the product of which will ultimately emerge into the light of the conscious brain-processes, while the steps in the manufacture of the product are lost.

*No impression lost.*—One thing is certain, however. No impression received by the nerve-terminals is ever lost but may be depended upon to have its effect upon the development of life. It may produce an immediate response, as in the case cited. It may give rise to a train of thought which ultimately



crystallizes into a decision and consequent course of action growing out of deliberate conscious cerebration and judgment. It may be stored among the subconscious memories and have part in giving rise to one of those sudden impulses to action, the origin of which we find it impossible to trace. It may meet its object in contributing to the formation of an ideal within the brain, or it may weave itself into the substance of the individual's thinking and have part in the development of habit and character.

*Susceptibility of the amoeba.*—Even the amoeba is susceptible to the effect of external contacts. If he finds that the medium in which he exists is growing cold and the temperature drops below that which is suited to his growth and development, he responds by rolling himself into a ball, secreting a heavy coat about himself, and passing into the condition known as encystment, when the pseudopodia are not produced, motion is impossible, and the infinitesimal creature lies dormant, hibernating until a better state of affairs shall be established about him.

*A spiritual skin.*—We have a spiritual skin which separates us from our neighbor but at the same time puts us *en rapport* with him. The nerve-filaments of our spiritual life ramify here and we know our fellows by the varied impressions they produce upon us. The contacts of the spirit life are multitudinous and our own complex character often reflects the accumulated effect of the influence of a myriad other lives.

*Thin-skinned Christians.*—There are thin-skinned and thick-skinned Christians. The former are those sensitive

individuals who allow the immediate sensation of any particular experience to govern their thinking and subsequent action as regards it. Their sense-perceptions are so delicate that a rebuff will close their mouths and an uncongenial atmosphere will apparently modify their whole character. A fancied slight under the microscope of a morbid spirit will be magnified to the dimensions of a determining factor in life's relations. There will be a sudden expansion of soul to a word of praise, while the touch of a wholesome criticism will shrivel the heart within them. Their contacts with others result in an alternation of anguish and joyous elation. Their activities are based on the sensation of the moment, they are unstable in their opinions and judgment, and their characters develop superficiality and unreliability. They will take up readily some new form of Christian service, but the first cold breath of difficulty or opposition leads them to abandon it.

*Thick-skinned Christians.*—The thick-skinned Christian, on the other hand, pays little attention to the opinion of others. He is not easily affected by impressions from without. There is a self-sufficiency which renders him more or less independent of his fellows. The prime end of his being seems to be the seeking of his own spiritual ease. He can never meet the need of life by pouring out the wealth of his own inner powers, for he has in a sense insulated himself from a real understanding of the situation without. He has built a corral about his own soul, and there are no gates in it. If he engages in Christian work he does so upon theory rather than experience, and hence his activities,

not having been called forth by the stimuli of actual sense-perceptions, are artificial. He has a system of theology ready-made and elaborated down to the last detail, for it is the product of his inner thought ungoverned by the corrective impact of contact with the opinions of others. This he is ready to fit upon other souls, but there is little perception upon his part that real Christian activity consists of the genuine action and reaction of life upon life and the imparting from one to another of that inner virtue which a life of continued contact with God has laid up.

*The normal Christian.*—With the normal Christian, however, life's contacts are made very delicately. There is a fine balance between impressions received and impulses originated. He has a perfect faith in the normal out-working of life. He believes that his organs of sense-impression will receive life's contacts normally; that they will be recorded by the spirit within and give rise to a healthy reaction. He is not unduly elated by the agreeable nor entirely cast down by the disagreeable impressions which are made upon him, for he knows that in the Christian life what a man will do with sense-impressions is largely within his own volition. Instead of being "like the waves of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed" (Jas. 1:6), he is master of his own soul and dominates the impressions produced upon him by every external circumstance.

*Governing circumstance.*—It is in this that the soul of man rises superior to the lower animals—that he transcends circumstance and molds his environment to his own will. The amoeba reacts to the cold and encysts; man

braves the cold, investigates its laws, controls them, and rises superior to temperature. Likewise the Christian rises superior to the ordinary man by governing his nervous reactions and choosing the effect which circumstances shall have upon him. In the physical body there is a system of nerves known as the inhibitory nerves, which have to do with the control of functions which might otherwise be overstimulated. Spiritually the normal Christian inhibits those impressions and impulses which would tend to disorganize the fine adjustment of his spiritual balance. He chooses that his spirit shall not be depressed, that evil suggestion shall not contaminate him; that rebuff shall not cause his soul automatically to close. He chooses that the stimuli of life shall pass into his thinking as constructive principle, giving rise to counteraction of noble deed, of high initiative, of daring enterprise.

*The "interpreter's house."*—Once again we are led into the "interpreter's house" of the imagination. To the man who lacks this master-key to the situation, life is an unsolved riddle. He wanders in a maze of unrelated experience. He suffers from a multitude of sensory impacts, which are contradictory in their meaning. But when touched by the magic of the consecrated imagination, the multitude of external impressions become intelligible to the inner spirit; the dissonances of life are resolved and the God-controlled brain manufactures from the material brought to it from without great plans to modify the world's life.

*Initiative.*—Initiative depends upon the imagination. There can be no

large grasp of a world-need without it. The interpretation of the phenomena present in any given set of circumstances becomes large and significant when touched by the imagination. The spirit-filled brain elaborates a plan, and decisive action is the outcome of it. The inspired movements of history have been due to the fact that some individual has gathered up the innumerable sense-impressions coming to him from without and, interpreting them under the guidance of a God-directed imagination, has grasped their inner meaning in relation to the development of the universe and, in completion of the nervous cycle, has found generated within his brain a corresponding plan of action.

*Original conceptions.*—The imagination has to do both with the interpretation of the impressions received and with the execution of the plan initiated. Without it one does not enter into a broad and sympathetic comprehension of the world's need, nor can one conceive a bold and well-wrought-out method to meet it. Decisive action in the right direction is the outcome of initiative governed by an imaginative grasp of the need. Out of the spirit's interpretation of the multitude of sense-impressions conveyed to the brain from the innumerable terminal nerve-filaments there spring definite decisions as to certain lines of action. The conscious process of comparison and judgment leads the individual to dismiss one line of conduct and adopt another, to reject that which seems unsuited to achieve the desired end and seek for exactly that method which will accomplish the desired result. When this process of consideration and selection is

carried on in the light of a heaven-touched imagination, the brain will often give rise to conceptions which seem entirely original.

*Acting upon impulse.*—The reaction growing out of sensory impressions, however, is not always the result of conscious deliberation. The whole process may take place below the threshold of conscious thought, and the action generated may emerge as a sudden impulse. Impulses are not always to be depended upon, for they may be the result of sense-impressions of the less worthy sort; but we need to learn that an impulse may be as logical and fundamentally sound as any carefully thought-out decision. There are some men who would do well to learn to act upon impulse. Inhibition has become a vice with them. They automatically suppress every good thought which comes to them, and render their lives empty and devoid of initiative through fear of doing something unusual. Mrs. Grundy is the *bête noir* of such timid souls. The daring spirit sifts his impulses in a flash, decides which are the good, and yields to them.

*Spiritual freshness.*—To preserve the fine edge of spiritual perception, to interpret broadly the messages of life through the sense-impressions telegraphed to the brain, to sift, sort, and compare them, to cast about them the aura of a great comprehension, and then to boldly outline life's fitting action—this requires a condition of physical and spiritual freshness. The imagination is the first faculty to be attacked by the toxins of fatigue. No broad conception or original action may be expected from a weary brain.

*An overstrained life.*—There are men who lead an overstrained life, either because the economic situation forces them to excessive hours of labor, or because they choose to crowd their leisure hours with the unworthy pursuit of pleasure to the extent of encroaching upon the time which should be given to sleep. Such individuals become habitually weary. The system is never entirely free from the poison generated by fatigue. They take up the day's work under a heavy handicap, for the habitually weary worker is capable only of routine labor of a comparatively low order. Creation and invention are relatively impossible to him. The young man who spends his nights in dissipation is very unlikely to rise to a high position in the business world.

*The great restorative.*—Sleep is the great restorative of the nervous system. "If he sleep he shall do well," is the accurate statement of a great general principle. We get a grip upon ourselves once more, and after the quiet hours during which every sensory terminal has been quiescent, we are ready once more to welcome the rush of a million impinging phenomena, taking them gladly to our heart, extracting their hidden meaning and initiating a ready response.

*Heart-rest.*—Equally there must be heart-rest for the individual who would preserve the delicate balance between the intake and the outgo of his spiritual life. We touch the lives of our fellows in a thousand spiritual contacts, and unless there be within us that freshness of soul which comes from communion with Him who said, "Come unto me and I will give you rest," it is quite

certain that we shall be unable to respond to those impressions with the vigorous soul initiative which will meet our brother's need.

*The quiescence of the soul.*—The quiescence of sleep has a very real counterpart in the spiritual life. Sometimes the soul becomes so overburdened with the demands made upon it, the nerves so wearied with the reception of millions of impressions and the effort to send forth the virtue called for, that the spirit cries out for the oblivion of forgetfulness. It is good to know at such times that the Master has anticipated this need on the part of His servants and that He repeats to us once more the words with which He calmed the nerves of His overwrought disciples when He said to them, "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile," and thus forgetting the confusion of the external voices and the nerve-racking strain of sense-impressions, we enter into the perfect rest of Him who "giveth His beloved sleep" (Ps. 127:2).

*Rest of the spirit.*—Rest of the spirit does not involve cessation of function. It is rather a diversion of the nervous force into less frequently used channels, the calling into play of other portions of the brain. It is a common error to suppose that religious earnestness requires the bow to be ever strung. Jesus elected to accomplish his entire earthly ministry in the brief space of three years, and yet it is manifest that these years contained frequent periods of relaxation and recreation.

*Humor and religion.*—It is a fair question whether humor is not the natural corollary and corrective of spirituality. Jesus has been called "the Man of Sorrows," and unquestionably there was

a predominant gravity about his life; and yet there are occasional evidences of a keen sense of humor, as well as a readiness to enter heartily and sympathetically into the lighter phases of social life. Certainly humor is a powerful reinforcement to a spiritual message, and the preacher who can temperately and naturally reach the source of human smiles which lies so close to the fountain of tears is the one who can most profoundly stir the human heart.

*The rhythm of spiritual experience.*—There are nodes and amplitudes in the spiritual experience of every man, and the recessions are as normal and necessary as the fuller tides of feeling. We have happily emerged from the age of monasticism and asceticism and now know that the happy flow of life in lighter vein which one finds in the Christian home, the recreation of muscle and nerve in games and healthy sport, the

relaxation which comes from roughing it by stream and lake and among the mountains and woods, the enrichment of mind and heart from the contemplation of natural beauty, as well as the satisfaction of the artistic instincts found in noble music and beautiful pictures, all help to form the subsoil for a healthy growth of spiritual power.

*Increments of power.*—The starting-point for heart-rest is the assurance that our wills and conduct are in harmony with God's, but when such a confidence is present we are free to let the mind and heart relax in the unstrained joy of a communion which needs not to be always explaining and exploiting itself; and after such a period of holiday relaxation one ought to return with great increments of spiritual power which have been accruing during the period when our spiritual exercises were to a large extent subconscious.

## VIII. CEREBRATION

*The cerebration of the soul.*—Add a consciousness of the presence of God to the ordinary process of human thought and you have prayer. Hence prayer might well be called the cerebration of the soul. We think God's thought with Him, and pursuing the ordinary train of our daily meditation in the presence of God, our mental processes become worship, because we recognize His presence in all about us; thanksgiving, because His goodness is so manifest; petition, because we and all our fellows have such need of Him.

*Sorting our stimuli.*—The process of thought begins in the impressions of external stimuli, sorting, classifying, and

storing them. The associational fibers of the brain then enable us to weigh, compare, and rearrange them, and the comparison gives rise to new ideas growing out of the combination of various impressions and groups of impressions. Thus active cerebration eventuates in judgments, impulses, decisions, purposes, and all those thousands of nervous reactions which govern life's activities.

*Receiving God's messages.*—Surround these processes with the consciousness of God's presence and the impressions received from without become His messages to our souls. Our spirits note the varied experiences of life and await the inner reaction which each will produce

when added to the multitude of stored memories. The spirit of prayer thus governs the reception of life's good or ill, and we are able to say, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28). It is not merely that we acquiesce in patient resignation to the will of God, but the cerebration of the soul actively sets itself to the task of finding the helpful relationship between the new impressions and the desire of God for the life.

*Living in the temple.*—It is in this way that we are able to obey the injunction, "Pray without ceasing." Not that we are constantly in the physical attitude of prayer, or formulating petitions in words, but our lives are lived in the presence of God. All the world is His temple and in the sanctuary of the soul the knee is ever bowed to Him. In the life of prayer, when an external impression of evil is received it produces a reaction of abhorrence, and then the cerebration of prayer automatically manufactures from it a petition that the evil may cease and that its victims may be freed. When an impression of need touches the brain-cells, the prayerful spirit throws about it the desire that the need be relieved.

*Developing antitoxins.*—The natural reaction of prayer upon one's own spiritual life has an analogy in the production of antitoxins in the human system. It is a well-established fact that in combating the effects of any poison introduced into the body there is elaborated in the blood certain principles which have come to be called antitoxins, and it is the protection thus afforded which gives the system immunity against subsequent

attacks of the same disease. May not the prompt prayer reaction of the penitent soul lead to the formation of a spiritual antitoxin which will serve to reinforce the life against subsequent temptation?

*Generating new prayer ideas.*—Comparison is made between the stored memories of other days and every new impression. There is adjustment and readjustment of ideas, all under the regnant influence of the spirit of God. New prayer ideas are produced and the heart flows out in many directions, led by the conscious and unconscious workings of the Spirit-dominated mind.

*The prayer of the amoeba.*—Even in the contracted existence of the simple cell one is perhaps justified in discovering the principle of prayer, albeit the prayer may merely consist of the amoeba's interpretation of the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." Desire itself is a prayer and in consonance with it we find every granule of the protoplasm of the protozoan generating within itself an urging toward the desired end which culminates in the projection of the pseudopodium. In a simple way it is the same process as human cerebration. The chemical reaction of some needed substance impinges as want upon the life of the cell. Previous experiences indicate the way to satisfaction. There is generated an impulse to repeat those experiences. The pseudopodium is thrust out and the need satisfied. The prayer of the amoeba is the urging within its protoplasm.

*A higher plane.*—It is elementary prayer indeed which concerns itself chiefly with its own needs. Inasmuch as the human spirit has been made

partaker of the divine nature, the prayer life occupies itself with the need of others. Multitudes of impressions are received, just as in the case of the amoeba, but they are immediately brought into relationship with the pre-conceived impressions of God's love, of Christ's compassion, and all the heavenly graces with which God's spirit has endowed the faithful soul. A process of prayer cerebation takes place, wherein the spirit lays hold of the new thought, clothes it in the garment of love, and introduces it to God as the petition of the heart.

*The dénouement of prayer.*—Cerebation of this kind gives rise to two series of phenomena in the life of the one who prays. First, the constant comparison of new experience and prayer thought going on all unconsciously to the individual himself weaves itself into the character and habit of the soul, so that life is passed on an ever-ascending plane. Second, the process of soul cerebation results in earnest and definite decisions and purposes which are consonant with prayer of the heart; and these decisions give rise to activities which help to answer the prayer.

*Character and habit.*—It would be an impossible burden for any man to weigh afresh the ethical merits of every act entering into the day's experience and to decide anew whether the proposed deed or word was in line with the will of God. It is here that the prayer principle helps us. Constant dwelling in the atmosphere of God's presence brings about a character which decides in advance the appropriate behavior in almost every set of circumstances, and we do automatically the thing we

ought to do. It has become a habit with us. But the root of the habit is our constant "practice of the presence of God."

*A magic wand.*—The faculty of imagination is the very crown and blossom of human cerebation. It is a magic wand transforming and transfiguring the dull details of life. It takes the crude materials of ordinary thought and builds a prince's palace from them; yea, a very temple for the habitation of the Highest. Just as the pseudopodium of the amoeba acts as its agent in the fulfilment of its simple life-cycle, so the imagination, the pseudopodium of the soul, represents the outreach of the spirit in its grasp of ordinary impressions and the manufacture therefrom of the power-compelling petitions of the soul.

*Moving pictures.*—The great agent for the accomplishment of results in the realm of prayer is the consecrated imagination. The imagination is kaleidoscopic. It presents us with a series of moving pictures which pass with lightning rapidity. In a few seconds it is possible to review the action of hours and days. Repeated efforts of the imagination in one direction cut deep furrows in the reflective consciousness. These may be in the right or wrong direction, for it is perfectly possible for the imagination to present distorted pictures and even gross caricatures of the actual facts.

*A board of censorship.*—The imagination is flexible, however, and susceptible of being molded. It may become the servant of the vilest and basest passions, but on the other hand may be the active instrument of the most exalted service in which human beings

can engage. Within the universe of the soul there should be erected a board of censorship to control the moving pictures of the imagination, and the three members of the board should be the Conscience, the Will, and the Holy Spirit.

*Controlling the imagination.*—We may gather courage from the realization that the imagination is susceptible of being controlled when functioning in wrong directions, and that the pictures presented by it are capable of being corrected and brought into conformity with the truth, so that definite constructive service may result.

*Mortgaging the thoughts.*—In these days of multitudinous advertisement one needs to acquire a defensive armor against the constant solicitation of extraneous interest. President Wilson gave utterance to a significant truth when he said on a certain occasion in connection with some clamant but inconsequential call which was being presented to him that his "thoughts were mortgaged beyond recall" in connection with the crisis in international affairs, and that he "dare not let them out to other matters." It is possible to capture the wayward fugitive of the mind and bring it back to its proper allegiance, until "every thought" is "captive to Christ."

*The Master's method.*—"We know not how to pray as we ought." But the Holy Spirit will teach us, and one of the very first lessons in "the school of prayer" is identification with the object of our petitions. In order that He might become "a merciful and faithful high priest" our Lord identified Himself with human nature and "offered up

prayers and supplications." In praying for Peter He did not merely pray: "God bless Peter," but He prayed for him that his faith fail not. Visualizing that scene in the atrium of the high priest's house, with its train of subsequent testings, He gathered these images into a petition for the strengthening of Peter's vacillating faith.

*Condensed petitions.*—The Master is no lover of volubility and He has assured us that we are not heard for our much speaking. We need not undertake to describe to the Father everything that passes through our mind, but the vivid realization of the circumstances of the individual for whom we are praying comes to us in a series of imagination pictures, and these we may express in a few words of earnest desire.

This method carries practical values for those who believe in prayer and desire to develop their powers in a direction often neglected for the lack of a method. The disciple's petition, "Lord, teach us to pray," finds an echo today in many a heart, and it is well therefore to explain further the method outlined above.

*A triple alliance.*—We should form a triple alliance between the imagination, the agency which brings to us the picture of need, be it magazine, sermon, or personal contact, and the highest function of the human soul, prayer. We never find any difficulty in praying earnestly for those whose suffering and want we have personally witnessed. But he who confines his prayer horizon to the boundaries of his own vision is poor indeed; and we have been taught in these days to broaden our sympathies until they embrace the globe. We cannot pray earnestly and effectively,



however, for these more distant interests unless they become real to us, and it is here that the consecrated imagination is prepared to be of great service. One may then formulate the following simple rules for such prayer.

First, we should educate and enrich our imagination by perusing the careful and accurate presentations which are brought to us in the magazines and other literature bearing upon the needs which have specially impressed us. We should correct and expand our previous images by a painstaking reading of the text of the articles and by studying in detail the illustrations. We should read to pray, and careless reading is apt to result in indifferent praying.

*Constructing an image.*—The illustrations which accompany such articles may be of more value than we have commonly supposed. The image presented to the imagination by a picture is more vivid but at the same time more fleeting than one which is laboriously built up in the mind by careful attention to the printed page. The effort required to construct the image from the text seems to imprint the outlines of the picture more permanently upon the brain. It follows that the ideal presentation is one which includes carefully prepared text and pictures, chosen with a view to supplying the text with the many details necessarily omitted.

*An enriched imagination.*—With this wealth of information regarding individuals, fields, native peoples, political situations, pressing needs, peculiar problems, and great opportunities, we may sit in quiet deliberative meditation, letting our imagination present these things vividly to our spirits until we

become indeed identified in some sense with the sufferings of the world and the perplexities of those who are grappling perhaps at closer quarters than are we with the problems of world-relief and reconstruction.

*The culmination of prayer.*—The culmination of our prayer will be when we reverently gather together the series of moving pictures of our imagination and present them to God with the burden of our own spiritual desire in a few crystallized sentences of actual petition.

*Determinative aspiration.*—Professor Fosdick has used in his book, *The Meaning of Prayer*, the expression "dominant desire." I should like to add another phrase. I believe that prayer is determinative aspiration. Something will come of our petition. It is unreasonable to suppose that God would have put within the human soul the possibility of translating its greatest powers into communion with the Highest without providing for the corresponding response to the prayer-expressed desire of the human heart.

*An occasion of need.*—I remember upon one occasion in our mission field in the Philippine Islands that my fellow-missionary Dr. Robbins and I sat upon the bank of a river far in the interior of the province. We had been visiting the town of Dumaraw, and after conferring with the mayor of the town, as well as with other officials, we had been refused any opportunity to present the gospel message.

*A cry and its response.*—As we sat upon the river bank under the shade of the bamboo foliage, we felt a good deal like the Israelites who hung their harps on the willow trees, and so we were led

to earnest and definite prayer that in some way God would open this particular town to the preaching of the gospel. Looking across the river, we noticed a crude raft of bamboo with which it was customary to transfer passengers from one bank to the other. There came a traveler to the edge of the river, who called across in no uncertain tones the customary cry for ferriage, *Balsa! Balsa!* The prompt and matter-of-course manner with which the ferryman answered the cry was a picture to us of the way in which the Lord deals with his children who come to him confidently with their petitions. There is the cry of need followed immediately by a response of power, reminding one of the verse in Chronicles: "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him" (II Chron. 16:9).

*Delayed answers.*—The reply to the sincere prayer follows automatically upon the tracks of the petition, but it may not arrive until after the lapse of long intervals. It was not until nearly a year later that we received the response to our prayer by the riverside, and it came in an unexpected way and place.

A "long-distance" reply.—I was upon the summit of a mountain of the province some distance from the town of Dumaraw, visiting a little church composed of rough mountaineers. There had been some recent conversions among them and we were celebrating the ordinance of baptism in a little pool at the foot of a mountain spur. Among the friends who had gathered was a visitor to the village, who was so impressed both by the ordinance and the preaching that

he asked if he himself might not unite with this body of Christian people and receive baptism. It developed afterward that he was the vice-president of the town of Dumaraw and it was through him that our prayers were answered and access gained to the town.

*Put yourself in his place.*—We shall prevail in prayer as we make use of our imagination to identify ourselves with the one for whom we are praying. "Put yourself in his place" would be an excellent motto to adopt. Having spent many quiet minutes with the kinetoscope of our inward thinking, we have come to realize in a new and compelling way the situation which has been the theme of our meditation. We have put ourselves in the place of our brother on the broader field and made his problem ours. The review of his environment and needs has not been merely passive. Every passing phase of our thinking has been wrapped about with the intense desire of our souls, and as we sum up the trend of the hours of quiet thought in a few spoken petitions, our meditation becomes determinative and we join in unloosing spiritual potencies which spring to reinforce the powers already working on the situation.

*Conducting a prayer-meeting.*—There is no better method of conducting a prayer-meeting, whether it be in the church, the women's society, the young people's society or the Sunday school, than for the leader carefully to prepare a presentation of certain well-chosen portions of our missionary magazines each month for reading in the circle, following this by quiet meditation upon the themes selected and brief petitions growing out of them.

*A link with the far fields.*—Nor can we better govern our periods of private prayer than by following the same method. The magazine before us forms a link between the worker on the far field and ourselves; the picture on the printed page is interpreted by the consecrated imagination and presented with the halo of our spirit's devout desires to God.

*A maverick.*—The horizon of one's own personal influence may be very greatly widened by this method of cultivating the prayer habit. We get into the way of associating our impressions, no matter from what source they come, with the upward look and the desire for God's help in connection with the new thought. You suddenly feel impressed with a need which ordinarily might be considered foreign to your own sphere of life and action. It is a "maverick" in the realm of thought, but immediately the soul surrounds it with the desire that God's will may be done in connection with the new impression, and thus you capture it and put your brand upon it, adding thus to the riches of your own prayer life.

*The higher atmosphere.*—Another practical application of this view is that the mind which is accustomed to training the imagination for co-operation in prayer will soon acquire the habit of associating the desireful frame of mind with all the workings of the imagination, so that the moment a picture of need or an image of opportunity is presented, no matter what work the individual may be engaged upon at the time, the attitude of prayer will fashion the new picture into a petition to the Throne of Grace, and the whole life will be lived in the higher atmosphere of communion with the Father regarding the needs of His world.

*Abiding.*—As the mind thus becomes habituated to prayerful consideration in connection with practically everything that comes into the life, we achieve that attitude of spirit which Christ laid down as the norm of every truly Christian life, i.e., we abide in Him; and abiding in Him, His desires become our desires, and the mainspring of our own life's energies becomes actuated by the indwelling spirit of the Master.

## IX. VISION

*Interpreting truth.*—The shepherd lad, David, interpreted spiritual truth in the descriptive terms of those phases of life which were more familiar to him. Many and many an hour of quiet watchfulness he had spent under the glory of the tropic stars, with the soft breezes of the summer night breathing about him; and it was the intense conviction of a devout spirit, reacting to the wonder of a world of marvels, which led him to cry: "The heavens declare the glory of God,

and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

*A physician's view.*—Had he been a modern physician with that same earnest heart, stirred and impressed by the miracles of fine adjustment manifested in the intricate detail of human anatomy, he would very likely have expressed the same thought by saying: "The human frame declares the glory of God, and the vertebral column is a demonstration of His handiwork."

*The atlas and axis.*—A study of vision starts with the spine, for the amplitude of man's powers of observation are due to the wonderful mechanism of the two upper vertebrae. These bones are known as the atlas and the axis, the former being the osseous ring which supports and balances the head, and the latter presenting the projecting hinge upon which the cranium turns. Together they are so accurately adjusted as to permit the utmost freedom of motion. The action of certain muscles of the neck will throw the head forward so that the vision is cast upon the ground immediately before one, circumscribing the outlook to the narrow horizon of one's immediate environment. Or muscular action will hold the head erect, allowing it to turn from side to side and the eyes take in the far vista of the distance, limited only by the rotundity of the earth's formation; while again, the contraction of the posterior muscles of the neck lifts the vision to higher levels and the immensity of the universe is outspread before the gaze.

*Downward, outward, and upward vision.*—Surely divine wisdom is manifest in this varied functioning. The multi-form experiences of human life make demands upon the widest variety of physical capacity. He who would know the details of the world in which he lives must be content at times with the down-cast vision and the concentrated attention of one who fixes his eyes upon the unconsidered trifles, which after all are not trifles, of daily life. But he must also be ready by the steady level gaze of the broad-minded man of the world to relate the details of his own narrow environment to the farther vision

of larger fields. The downward look must be varied by the outward look and the details of the circumscribed life compared with and corrected by the generalities of the world which lie beyond. But no man who has truly read the message of the daily detail of his own life and interpreted the vision of the broad horizon will be content until he has lifted his head still farther and caught the upward look which penetrates the infinite spaces where God dwells.

*Fixation of the soul's vision.*—The downward look is concerned with the vision of duty. One must needs concentrate the attention to take in the details which lie close at home. No service of any real importance can be accomplished without this earnest, determined fixation of the soul's vision upon the thing in hand. There are certain tasks which can be done blindly, but they are the routine labors of the hand which by frequent repetition have become automatic. The task worth while is new every day and requires that we bring to bear every faculty of the soul upon its accomplishment.

*A complicated combination.*—The clear-cut images of near vision are not achieved without effort. A complicated optical combination is required. To the downward-bent gaze must be added the focusing of the double image and the adjustment of the crystalline lens, by means of the ciliary muscle. This adjustment is automatic but none the less marvelous.

*Myopia.*—The very difficulty which is experienced in certain abnormal conditions demonstrates the essential importance of this need for concentration. We do it apparently without effort, but

the sufferer from myopia knows that the effort is present, although unperceived. A friend of mine who suffered from this condition from childhood related to me his experience. As a boy he was considered backward and dull on account of his inability to read from the blackboard. Little details easily escaped him. One of his boyish tasks was to sweep the basement; and he well remembered his father's exasperation because he failed to sweep it clean. The real fact of the matter was that he could not see the dirt, but his oversight was interpreted not infrequently as obstinacy and laziness. Finally the state of the case became clear and he was sent by his father to an optician. His eyes were examined and carefully fitted glasses procured. They revealed to him a new world. He was now nineteen years of age, and never in all his life had he really seen. He went out from the optician as though walking on air. The sidewalk seemed nearer and he found himself lifting his feet unnecessarily high. He laughed at his own absurdity, but life was a new experience and the details of the world fascinated him. Birds, flowers, trees, and the faces of his friends presented a new and delightful appearance, for he had been half-blind to them until now.

*Spiritual nearsightedness.*—There is many a spiritual myope who not only fails to observe the details of his daily duty, but misses half the beauty of life. Duty without insight is irksome, but it is this very possibility of thorough comprehension yielded by the study of details which reveals to us the beauty and harmony of nature. The microscope cannot be used without fixation of

the visual apparatus. But it is this instrument which has enabled us to determine the inner nature of tissues and revealed to us the minute structure of the universe. Without it we should still be ignorant, not only of the microscopic life about us, but also of the intimate knowledge of our own being.

*Comprehending the details of life.*—The microscope is an extension of the powers of fixation and concentration belonging to the eye. It enables us to know minutely the world in which we live and, knowing it, to appreciate its beauty. Many an object of crude and ugly aspect becomes transfigured under the powerful lens into a vision of beauty. So the common round of daily life needs to be transformed by an inner comprehension of the meaning of its details. When spiritual health reigns, the eye of the soul has a clear vision of every minute particle of life's structure and interprets the meaning of the detail in the glory of the completed whole, so that day by day life's fabric is woven with loving attention to every part as though, like Mary of old, we were weaving a seamless garment for our Lord.

*Duty and beauty.*—It is not merely for the convenience of amateur poets that the word "duty" rhymes with "beauty," for not only the rhyme of life but also its rhythm and complete harmony are bound up in the comprehension that these two ideas have a fundamental relationship. If duty seems forbidding, examine its minute structure and see if it has no elements of beauty. If it looms large and oppressive, look at that part of it which lies nearest and see whether the strength for the moment is not fully equal to the task. If the task of the day seems

to have become commonplace and uninteresting, observe its details in the light of the great end toward which you are working, and see if a new enthusiasm for the work is not generated.

*Perpetual fixation impossible.*—No vision is capable of perpetual fixation, however, and the normal vision of the eye at rest is that which rests upon the horizon. If the downward gaze is perpetuated, eyestrain results. It was "the man with the muck rake" whose form was ever bent and whose eyes were concerned only with the dust at his feet. It is impossible to see things in their right relations if we view them from only one angle of vision.

*Gauged for far-sight.*—The normal eye is gauged for far-sight. It is impossible to produce eyestrain by looking afar off. Strained vision is always near-sighted. Myopia is a disease. The restfulness of a view of the ocean or the far plains of the West is dependent upon this fact. The ciliary muscles relax, the lens assumes its most natural contour. Focusing is at its easiest and the image is produced upon the retina without effort, conscious or unconscious.

*A taxing task.*—In Canton, China, one of the many native hand industries is the making of very beautiful jewelry from the iridescent feathers of the kingfisher. It requires the maximum of concentration to prepare and place accurately the minute pieces going to make up the feathery mosaic. Many of the workers go blind, and all of them suffer from severe conditions of eyestrain, their red and swollen lids proclaiming the violence which is being done to the visual organs. The vision of the far horizon is the right remedy for

those conditions of eyestrain which result from close work continued through many hours of the day.

*Arriving at the point of rest.*—Complete rest of body and soul is always associated with far vision, and even so the person who has arrived at the point of rest in his own experience is he who has followed out, not merely a detailed examination of his own environment, but has also caught the vision of the far horizon and related his own life and labors to it.

*Christian provincialism.*—The day for Christian provincialism is absolutely past. A hundred years ago it was possible for an individual to be born in some small interior village, to pass his life within its narrow confines, and to go to join the great company of the dead without ever having come in contact with the world lying without. The little details of his life offered him sufficient interest to fill the daily round, and beyond a dull unrecognized yearning for something higher and better, he failed to develop any serious concern regarding the great sweep and swing of the world's life passing without. Today, however, the situation is entirely changed. Every one of us has become the center of the universe, for we are bound to the great mass of our fellows by a thousand indissoluble ties. The railroad, the steamship, the newspaper, the telegraph, and the telephone insist upon the constant interchange of life's influences among us. We are truly bound up in one bundle of life.

*World-citizenship.*—Above all people in the world the Christian has no right to an isolated life. There is a distinct and definite reason for his being, which

lies in the challenge of the Master, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel." The first Great Cosmopolitan has enfranchised all His subsequent followers with world-citizenship. We neither live nor die unto ourselves. The Christian is obligated by the nature of his new-found life to relate himself to all the world and find his neighbor in the antipodes. He must bring to bear the near vision of a careful scrutiny to the details of his daily avocation, to make sure that in some way it dovetails into the plan of the Master-Workman; and then he must lift his vision to the far spaces of the world until he comprehends the entire scheme of redemption and finds the routine of his own daily task transfigured in the light of a divine plan, in which it bears its proper part. There is something wrong with the calling of the Christian man who cannot discover this relationship between his own work and the kingdom enterprise.

*A united heart.*—There is something wonderfully illuminating in the touch with the far horizon. "Thine eyes shall behold a land of far distances" (Isa. 33:17). To interpret one's own life in the terms of Christ's world-plan helps one to that condition of inner harmony of which the psalmist speaks, "Unite my heart to fear thy name" (Ps. 86:11). No one can do his best work or make his life count for the most while the inner motives and desires of his heart are at cross-purposes. There is nothing which will so tend to harmonize the discord and bring about the fundamental internal peace, which must lie at the base of the highest service, as the far vision which takes in the broad

world-fields and comprehends the power and scope of Christ's ultimate purposes.

*The church and the world-whisper.*—The pastor of a large city church once told me that when he first came to the church he had found a very annoying echo, which threw back the voice from different parts of the auditorium in such a way as to produce at certain points a medley of discords, rendering it impossible to distinguish what was being said. The remedy for the difficulty was finally found in stringing some two miles of copper wire back and forth under the arching beams of the roof. Connected with the church was the inevitable small boy, interested in wireless telegraphy. The latter had constructed for himself a simple receiver, and it occurred to his ingenious mind that the wire would make a good aerial. He therefore attached his instrument to it and with the proverbial patience of Job sat waiting for many hours for a message. His patience was finally rewarded and there came to him across the far spaces a whisper from more than a thousand miles away.

*A remedy for discord.*—In many and many a church there is discord and dissension which has grown through the years from too earnest concentration upon its own things; and the sovereign remedy for the unhappy wrangling of such a condition of ingrowing selfishness is to harmonize the medley of dissentient voices by touch with the farther world-fields. So also the turmoil of a spirit distressed by contradictory feelings and impulses disappears when the soul comprehends the world-need and unites all its forces in world-service.

*The upward look.*—A very little adjustment of the cervical muscles, and

the face is lifted to the stars. No man's vision is complete until he has added to the close scrutiny of the detailed task and the far view of the world-horizon the upward look which puts him in touch with God. There is something faith-compelling about the deep vault of heaven. Prayer is instinctively directed upward. Christ came to us out of the heavens and disappeared again before His disciples' upturned gaze. Many a time the blue above has been resplendent with the revelation of God, and the unthinkable space stretched out before us speaks of His infinity. It is the upward look of the soul which brings heaven into the heart.

*Heaven touches earth.*—We are united to God by a glance, and along the unmeasured pathway of the spirit's heavenward look descend the powers of the heavenly kingdom to rectify and energize the powers of ordinary earth-life. "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the sky pour down righteousness" (Isa. 45:8). So duty becomes glorified by the celestial light. The narrow environment of one's own dark lot is enlightened from above, and both the immediate task and the broad world-enterprise become comprehensible and we perceive their interrelationship in the plan of God.

## X. SPEECH

*An individual message.*—"And for me that utterance may be granted unto me" (Eph. 6:19). There is an essence which is native to the soul of every man, determining the reaction which shall be produced by every stimulus coming to him from without. What shall be the precise effect of any word upon the thought of another none can say, for the impression from without uniting with the individual genius of the spirit within produces a reaction in every man's soul which is just a shade different from that produced in the soul of any other man. It is when the message reaches the inner shrine of great souls that great responses are given forth; but great or otherwise, it is true that every soul makes its own individual reply to the world-call and has a unique message to give back in exchange for that which it receives from others.

*The growth of the message.*—We spend our life in more or less successfully

learning to give utterance to the individual message of our own souls. That which passes within the hidden chambers of the heart is utterly concealed from the knowledge of our fellows unless the silver key of speech shall set free the interpreting message of the heart which has been gathering form and force through the years of silence. Incalculable multitudes of sensory stimuli have fallen upon the sensitive terminal filaments of the nervous system. Unnumbered millions of impressions have been registered upon the cells of the brain. Every one of them has wrought its own reaction. Through the long years of childhood and youth we have been chiefly animated question boxes. Our lives have consisted in interrogating the world, which we have done by direct word, by tentative action, by experiment, and by choice. But as the years have elapsed, the experimental has become the judicial and the judicial has



given place to the initiatory; and one day we awake to discover within our soul a newborn song, an evangel of great joy, a message of compelling force, an interpretation which will add to the riches of the world's understanding.

*A messenger from heaven.*—We cannot understand how it came there. It seems a thing apart from us; something which has come by direct revelation. But it goes on repeating and reiterating itself in a thousand differing forms. Its first burden is for ourselves. It is like a messenger from heaven sent to interpret all the questionings and doubts of life's conflicting experience. It harmonizes this difficulty and quiets that tremor, it hushes this disquieting thought and brings out the hidden meaning of that dark saying. Its illuminating ray casts light upon the path which we trod in darkness and enables us to leap to an understanding of the calamity, the meaning of which all our past searching had failed to reveal. It falls like a healing message of peace upon the raw and bleeding surface of feelings which have been lacerated through years of misunderstood suffering; it robs the bitter years of their root of irritation, and fills the blank days with a song of joy.

Every soul hath its song  
Its melody divine  
Rising to ecstasy,  
And so hath mine.

*A torch within the soul.*—Through the long days of groping we have felt that one day our own message would come to us, and when it does, we take the messenger to our heart and caress it tenderly as the child of our soul-brain. It is not until we have examined the intricacies

of our own soul and looked at its ancient furniture in the light of this new possession, not until we have tried the effect of the new interpretation upon the well-known opinions of our past days and revised all our former judgments by its inner meaning, that we come to realize that we have received this new message of our own soul's creation, not so much for our own benefit as for the benefit and blessing of the world of men about us.

*The necessity for utterance.*—Immediately there is borne in upon us a vision of the reaction our message will produce among our fellows when it goes ringing out to the world, and a newborn impression of necessity is laid upon us: "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." We feel the utter necessity for self-expression and repeat the prophet's experience: "His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay" (Jer. 20:9).

*The organs of speech.*—Anticipating man's absolute necessity for utterance, God provided the human larynx and organs of speech. Tentatively and experimentally, we use them throughout many formative years, lisping the first broken syllables of infant speech, trying our unaccustomed organs with new consonants and difficult vowel-sounds. Shall we ever reach the limit of variation of which the vocal organs are capable?

*The gamut of articulation.*—We, of a single-tongued country, lack the facility of expression found among those peoples across the sea, where the geographical situation requires them to use more than one tongue. And farther afield, in the byways of the earth, one encounters

sounds and syllables used by those whom we are accustomed to call barbarians, which we should find it well-nigh impossible to produce. For example, among the Eskimos one discovers a liquid *l* which has a similar sound in no civilized language save Welsh. There is also a *g* which partakes of the nature of a rolling *r*. We of the civilized lands are far from exhausting the possibilities of sound in our simple speech. What if a higher sphere discovers to us a language which is as liquid melody to our gross senses, and which exhausts the gamut of possible articulation!

*The best meaning of speech.*—The years pass and words become familiar to us; the accumulating of a vocabulary interprets our own ideas to us. We become fluent in the use of words, and sounds pass between us which we fondly believe express our heart's feelings, the one to the other. But it is only when we receive our own message for the world that we awake to the best meaning of speech and understand why we have been practicing with vocables all these many years. It is that we may express our supreme thought to others and add to the riches of the world's life. Words come readily to us now; simple they are and sincere, for we have no need of verbiage to give utterance to this new child of our soul. Great thoughts are always simple, and the limited vocabulary of the unlearned is sufficient to interpret all of life. The riches accumulated by the inner nature through many years have become crystallized and systematized, and we find ourselves equipped to express in varying forms suited to the comprehension of our hearers the message of our own soul.

*Dumbness of the soul.*—One of the greatest tragedies of the soul-life is to awake and discover one's self to be dumb. Dumbness of the soul is dependent upon two main causes. It may be due to the fact that through all the years wrong choices have been made, unworthy pursuits followed, and low ends sought. The sorting of the impressions received from without has been from the point of view of personal gratification, and the reactions growing from it have been poor and cheap. So that when the soul awakens, if ever it does, it finds no accumulation of riches, no store of inner wealth to share with the world, and the life passes songless and dumb among its fellows. For the message of the soul is only wrought through years of earnest seeking for the best, through a determination to deny the faithless wavering of the spirit and to cling to the assurance that the light of an understanding day will dawn. We learn to "comfort others with the comfort wherewith we ourselves have been comforted of God" (II Cor. 1:4).

*Poverty of the soul.*—How poverty-stricken, then, is the soul which through all the years has sought only the lower good, ministering merely to the pleasure of the moment. Dumb, because it has never accumulated impressions of the need of others and how that need may be met; inarticulate, because it has never extracted from life the inner meaning of its multiplying phenomena and related it to the message of the Master of life; songless, because it has composed no symphony of unselfish service from the strains of melody which have come to it from other lives.

*Casting out the dumb spirit.*—Dumbness, for lack of a message, is the most

hopeless of afflictions. In the chorus of life the individual sits mute amid the reproachful voices of his fellows. In the testimony meeting of the universe every happy message is a rebuke to his inarticulate silence. If perchance the awakening of the soul has come, there is only one thing for this dumb spirit to do and that is to go back into the school of life and, by studying the harmony of other souls and the great overtones of the Master, to wait and work until in the mercy of God the dumb spirit be cast out and the tongue of the soul be loosed. "This kind goeth not forth but by fasting and prayer."

*Dumbness for lack of words.*—The other cause of dumbness is less terrible, for while the soul may dwell in silence, it is not for lack of a message, but because it has never learned to express this message in the hearing of others. There are individuals to whom expression comes as naturally as breathing, and there are others who find it well-nigh impossible to put into words the thoughts of their hearts. Their dumb souls struggle to break the bonds which fetter them, but they have never learned speech, and the world is robbed of their message unless perchance they can express it through life and action. This also is possible, for there are silences which are eloquent, and there are humble souls whose stammering tongues have never been able to voice their feelings, who yet put the stamp of a great spirit upon the world by lives of unselfish devotion and quiet usefulness.

*The message which transcends speech.*—There is other speech than that of the vocal organs. One man's message comes to him in the silence of the scientific

laboratory and is expressed in chemical formulas which will render easier the hard lot of countless of his fellows. To many a woman the crystallization of her soul's thinking has led to the crowded ward of the metropolitan hospital, and she has spoken eloquently to many sufferers through the strain and toil of days and nights which are given to no routine fulfilment of perfunctory duty but to gentle ministrations of utter faithfulness. Perhaps most difficult of all is it for the factory toiler, whose task lies in the monotonous repetition of a single group of motions through long hours of the day, to find his own message and give it adequate expression; and yet even here the soul which has sought for the higher interpretation of life will discern the Master standing by the loom, and will learn from His lips the word which shall relate the monotonous task and all the dull routine of life to the higher purposes of eternity, and so through patient endurance, honest service, blameless conduct, and human sympathy will find a way to express the song of the soul.

*The stammering tongue.*—Self-expression is to be sought after, and the power of an unselfish life may be reinforced by well-chosen words. "Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11). Discouragement often accompanies a stumbling and broken effort to express one's self in speech. We feel that the stammering tongue can render but bunglingly the delicate meaning of the sympathetic spirit; and so we are often stung into silence by the feeling that we have failed and failed repeatedly to express in fitting words the thought of

our heart. It should be remembered, however, that the sensitive spirit, smarting from a conviction of failure before one's fellows, cannot possibly estimate accurately the effect of the stumbling speech; for broken words and halting phrases may often convey more unerringly than the most polished periods the touch of human sympathy and the message of truth which the soul struggles to express. Moreover, the pathway to perfection is always a *via dolorosa*, and we gain ability to control and direct the unruly tongue through the progress of years, until the faculty of speech becomes fully unbound and we need exercise no care for the manner of utterance, but only that the thing to be said be truly worthy.

*The barrier of foreign speech.*—No one knows so well as the missionary at work among a foreign-speaking people the pain of having a message shut up in one's heart, while the inward urging of the spirit for utterance beats its baffled pinions against the stubborn barrier of an unfamiliar tongue. The early years of the missionary's experience abroad, while he is learning to adapt himself to new surroundings and struggling with the heartbreaking eccentricities of the new language, are the most critical period of his life. The grotesque errors into which he finds himself falling, the occasionally startling situations into which his mistakes lead him, are the lighter and more humorous side of the matter. It is well, perhaps, that one's sense of humor can come to one's assistance at such a time, as for example in the case of the young lady who suddenly realized that she had been telling her oriental companion to go and fetch her

a "devil," when she had intended to say "hatchet." Ludicrous examples of this kind are innumerable upon every mission field. A certain missionary, who went to China rather late in life and who had therefore never fully mastered the varying tones which make such radical differences in the meanings of Chinese words, is in the habit, although he does not realize it, of commencing the Lord's Prayer, when leading in public worship, with the words, "Two old women in a field."

*A ripened utterance.*—But there are times when humor fails to appeal and when the irksome limitations of speech which oppose so formidable a barrier between the missionary and those whom he would reach are well-nigh exasperating. The facility with which a language may be acquired varies greatly with different individuals, but even to those who acquire it more readily, long hours of painful concentration and the constant training of ear and tongue to distinguish and reproduce the unfamiliar sounds are necessary. It is this process of determined and painstaking effort which develops within the missionary's own soul a more earnest realization of the pre-eminent importance of the message. The travail of his spirit distills the honey of a concentrated message which has ripened and intensified during the days of effort required to break down the barrier of differing speech dividing him from his fellow, so that when the barrier is removed he has something better worth while to offer than would have been the case had the language come without effort.

*Missionaries in a world of foreigners.*—After all, the situation is the same in all

our lives. We are all missionaries among crowds of foreigners whose language we know but imperfectly. The gift of tongues is never bestowed gratuitously. When once we have discovered the message of our own soul, we must learn the language of our brother. It is a painful process, and the textbook is life. The projection of one's self into the other's life by sympathetic affection and imaginative grasp are the methods which will help us to win, but we must needs be taught by the Master, who "spake as never man spake," and who expressed His own message so perfectly that He could say, "The words that I speak unto you, they are the spirit and they are life" (John 6:63), before we can hope to convey adequately the inner thought of the heart.

*Masters of expression.*—There are certain masters of expression to whom is given the gift of song, and who can utter their heart's message in tones more fittingly perfect than are found in common speech. The union of the simple and sincere spirit which has received its message and grasped the true meaning of life, with the capacity to interpret this message in song, forms perhaps the most powerful existing combination for imparting spiritual truth. Which of us has not at one time or another been moved to the profoundest depths by the poignant sweetness of such a message, expressed in the satisfying tones of one who feels the message and makes use of his gift under the overmastering influence of a prayer that it may minister to the soul-needs of his hearers?

*An unwarranted incongruity.*—There can be, however, no greater incongruity than the gift of melody used by one

whose heart is barren of understanding, and whose delicate vocal chords, endowed with the possibilities of heavenly harmony, voice sacred words unmeaningly. The practice of hiring trained singers to lead in the service of song in our wealthy churches, men and women whose lives, in many cases, are unworthy of the words their lips frame and voices utter in Christian worship, approaches very closely to blasphemy. There is something searing and killing about the habit of making use of the vocabulary and phraseology of spiritual things without comprehending the wonderful meanings conveyed by the words. It is "a savor of death unto death," and the individual who forms the habit grows a callus over the sense-organs of the soul. This has its application also to the glib phrases of traditional or habitual religiosity. If a pious phrase comes too readily to our lips, we have reason to be profoundly suspicious of it.

*The song of the soul.*—The gift of song is not confined to those to whom the accident of birth has given finely adjusted vocal chords. There is the song of the soul, as well as the larynx; and the humblest may acquire the melody of the heart. We were making a tour of our Philippine mission field. All day long we had toiled under the tropical sun, over the rough highways and tortuous byways of the interior of the province. Here we passed between fields of rankly growing sugar-cane, there under the grateful shade of stately cocoanut palms. Again the way led through swampy sections, ribbed with the corduroy path of palm trunks, or along the precarious ridges of the earthy dams which separate rice field from rice field. The heat had been intense and

the way toilsome; but the sun dipped low upon the horizon, and with the coming of the evening a cool breeze sprang up, dissipating the shimmering heat-waves which enveloped us. We were approaching the village of San José. The ground led gently up in soft slopes to the palm-crowned hills, and as we neared the village, suddenly there came to us, borne on the breeze, the faint whisper of a song, so delicate as to be at first unrecognized, coming and going, now louder, now fainter, but gradually growing in strength until as we neared the humble bamboo dwellings we could distinguish the words, "Father, I stretch my hands to Thee." Humble folk they were, peasants, all of them, but they had not been "disobedient to the

heavenly vision," and to them had been given the "song in the night." Living their simple lives among the rice paddies and the palm groves, in touch with the soil and gaining their living from it daily, they yet grasped the significance of life, and among them were those who were as truly dedicated to a life of Christian service as the missionary who had come across the seas with the message of awakening for them. It is the long-continued effort of daily life, the repeated endeavor to express the best that is in one in the vernacular of common life, suited to the needs of one's fellows, which culminates in the transformation of that message into the song of joy and rejoicing, even in the dark hours of the night.

## XI. LIFE'S CONTINUITY

*The fountain of eternal youth.*—Immortality is not unthinkable, even in the physical realm. Recent experiments in the laboratory would seem to demonstrate that it is possible, at least theoretically, so to modify their environment that single cells may live forever. Tissues have been preserved apart from the body, and under proper conditions have not only retained their vitality but have grown and developed. Groups of cells preserved at the proper temperature and under favorable nutritive conditions have survived for long periods and fulfilled all the functions of their little lives. Even reproduction has taken place, the cell dividing to give origin to another of its kind. Periodically the cells seem to assume a senile appearance. They are about to grow old and die, but with the marvelously delicate

technique of the modern laboratory it has been found possible to wash out of them, with proper solutions, the accumulating toxic products of metabolic processes and restore the cells to their pristine vigor, starting them upon a new lease of life. This may be done repeatedly; and no good reason seems to exist why it should not be done indefinitely. One is reminded irresistibly of the Fountain of Eternal Youth, for which Ponce de Leon sought.

*A daring dream.*—There are, however, infinite distances between the primitive existence of simple organisms and the complex structure of the human frame; so that one may not too readily leap to the conclusion that what may be done in a low form of animal life is also possible for more highly developed beings, although daring souls have

ventured to dream even of this possibility.

*The last enemy.*—For practical purposes there is no truer Scripture than that which speaks of us as being "through fear of death all our life time subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:15). "It is appointed unto man once to die," and look at it how we will, death is an enemy and we fear the pangs of dissolution. The cessation of functions, the gradual loosing from earth ties and drifting away from those stimuli which, through our various contacts with those about us, have brought to our hearts multitudes of impressions and evoked corresponding responses, is fraught with uneasiness, if not terror, unless there is such a firm grasp of the life beyond as to assure the soul that death is merely a transition: "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

*Living the life of the spirit.*—Just this is the high privilege of the Christian soul. Through a greater or lesser period we have been exercising functions which are not dependent upon material contacts. Analogous they are, and just as real as those earthly functions which are now growing faint and approaching the point of cessation. We have been living the life eternal for years; "the bread of life which cometh down from heaven" has been the source of our soul's strength. Nourished and built up in Him, we have developed moral muscles and spiritual fiber which have fitted us in advance for the new environment where the spiritual reigns. Earnestly using the strength given us from day to day, we have exercised those spiritual muscles in Christian service, striving to pass on the light and life given us that others also

may become partakers of the divine life through our efforts. We have interpreted every fresh experience of life as it has made its impact upon our spirits, and from it have learned to see afar off, as well as near at hand. Our vision has become coterminous with the far horizon of the globe, and perhaps this is why the Master sees fit to translate us to realms where even farther vistas of knowledge and vision will be spread before us. The discordant sounds of daily life, as they have come to our ears, have been resolved and harmonized within our souls and have given rise to that new song of the soul, which is our message to the world. In some sense the discipline of life has taught us the speech of the angels and we awake neither blind nor dumb, for spiritual senses have been created within us through the passage of the years.

*Prepared.*—And so we find ourselves prepared—but prepared for what? How simply and beautifully Paul puts it in II Cor. 5:1-5: "For we know that if this poor tent, our earthly house, is taken down, we have in Heaven a building which God has provided, a house not built by human hands, but eternal. For in this one we sigh, because we long to put on over it our dwelling which comes from Heaven. Yes, we who are in this tent certainly do sigh under our burdens, for we do not wish to lay aside that with which we are now clothed, but to put on more, so that our mortality may be absorbed in life. And He who formed us with this very end in view is God."

*Finding one's self at home.*—We learn then that the exercise of spiritual faculties during these present probationary

days is developing within us that spiritual nature which shall find itself utterly at home when the change comes. How vitally essential it becomes to seek the normal and healthy development of that inner life, which is to inhabit eternity! To Paul the inner life seemed more vivid and real than the outer existence. "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:25). "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20).

*Partakers of the divine nature.*—It is the exercise of the spiritual faculties of which we have been speaking which assures us of divine sonship. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God" (I John 3:2). And having been made partakers of the divine nature, the attributes of the Father appear in the child as we permit the spirit-life to prevail over that which is merely material. "I am a boxer who does not inflict blows on the air, but I hit hard and straight at my own body and lead it off into slavery, lest possibly, after I have been a herald to others, I should myself be rejected" (I Cor. 9:27). And thus through a life in which the spirit is permitted to triumph "we are changed into His image, from character to character, even as by the Lord, the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:18).

*The possibility of spiritual health.*—What increments of power come to us day by day; what development of latent possibilities; what growth in strength and grace, until we approximate perfect manhood, "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Let it be settled definitely in our minds that spiritual health is possible. Paul's ideal was "that we be no more children, tossed to and fro

and carried about by every wind of doctrine, but may grow up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:14-16).

*Made in His likeness.*—No man knows the hidden potentialities which lie within him, but this we know, that not one whit less than the best will be the lot of those who permit Christ to be formed in them. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (I John, 3:2).

*The fate of the unfit.*—One cannot help wondering what will be the status of those feeble souls who, while their hearts have been awakened, have yet lacked strength to pursue with vigor the normal Christian life, have failed to grasp the world-vision and have no message of hope and cheer for their fellows. Will they enter that higher life handicapped in some spiritual way, analogous to those little blind and dumb children who are sometimes born into this life? What a fate it would be to graduate among the angels and find one's self mute and defective! What a sense of unutterable loss must come to those who during this period of earth-trial have failed to develop those robust spiritual characteristics which should fit them for the new and heavenly sphere!

*Life on the higher plane.*—Life's continuity will be upon that plane where



souls converse daily with God and spirits do His high service as part of life's natural order. Will there be souls at a loss in that presence? We cannot say, but of this we may be sure, that God gives us now the opportunity of developing within us those physiological functions of the inner life which by their normal growth will assure us of readiness to take up life upon that higher plane which shall ultimately be ours.

*Temperamental piety.*—There are those who would hold that piety is a matter of temperament, and that men are good or bad according as they happen to have been endowed with a trend toward one or the other. Doubtless it is true that some find within themselves faculties more naturally alert to spiritual things; but we may be certain that no soul is lacking in those elements which make possible a response to the high stimulus of the Christian life. And given even the rudiment of a function, it becomes to us a matter of choice whether or no we will develop it.

*Developing a faculty.*—There are certain groups of muscles which in lower animals are well developed and active, but in man are merely rudimentary. Such, for example, is the group found about the ear, the *retrahens*, *attrahens*, and *attolens aurum*. In many animals, the elephant for example, these muscles are so strong as to enable them to move their ears readily. The same group exists in the human being, but while an occasional small boy can be found with the interesting distinction of being able to wiggle his ears most of us have these muscles so poorly developed as to be incapable of doing so. The encouraging thing, however, is that, were the accom-

plishment desirable, we could acquire it. The constant concentration of our attention upon that part of our anatomy, with corresponding effort to move the muscles in question, would eventually produce the desired result.

*A system of voice cultivation.*—A prominent master of voice production bases his system of instruction upon this principle. He leads his pupils to a study of the larynx and then teaches them to direct their attention to that particular group of muscles operating upon the vocal chords which will produce the desired effect. Frequent and determined concentration of the attention brings to bear the auxiliary powers of the nervous system and enables the pupil to make intelligent advance in the right direction, eliminating thereby many of the innumerable tentative efforts and false motions involved in a method based merely upon a blind imitation of a set model.

*The physiology of soul-life.*—The same practice should be observed in the development of the inner life, and here we discern the value of making a careful study of what may be called the physiological principles governing the life of the soul. We are not called by the gospel message to a mere *imitatio Christi*, but to the reception of a divine life which will, under proper conditions, work itself out according to the irrefragable biological and physiological laws which prevail throughout the entire universe wherever life exists. It is therefore not merely reasonable but essential that we should give careful attention to the principles governing the normal development of the spirit-life, with a view to the fulfilment of

those conditions which make for health and vigor of soul.

*A biological conception.*—The Scriptures insist strongly upon this biological conception of the soul-life. Conversion is not a barren, mechanical turning from one set of opinions to another, or even from one course of conduct to a better. Conversion involves the arrest of the attention, the opening of the heart, and the preparation of the soul for a new and divinely imparted life. Christ speaks of the experience as being "born again." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." At the very outset of the spiritual life one is endowed with faculties which in every respect parallel the physical existence. "As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2).

*Studying the laws of health.*—It is only in comparatively recent times that the physiology of the physical system has been well understood and the principles which make for the maintenance of physical health classified, but the laws governing the normal development of the soul-life have been at our command for centuries in the pages of the New Testament, although not in classified form. They are as unerring in their operations and as absolute in their judgments and condemnations as the laws of physical well-being, and it behooves us therefore to give careful study to the physiology of the inner life if we would gain that happy condition of soul-vigor which is within every man's power.

*Choosing the best.*—It lies within the domain of the human will whether we will choose to develop those latent possibilities of spiritual power which God has placed within us. What a tragedy it

is for any intelligent human being having the possibility of developing within himself spiritual faculties fitted in all respects for existence upon the highest conceivable plane, if he shall choose rather those base elements of the world which will accentuate the material and transitory in his make-up. Let us choose rather to make an intelligent study of the physiology of the inner life and then turn all the nervous energies of our being in the direction of a compliance with those principles which make for the upbuilding of the soul-life.

*Not a mere mechanical scrutiny.*—There is no desire to indicate here a mere mechanical study of the science of soul-health with a view to concentrating the attention upon the attainment of personal spiritual development, much as certain of the wealthy, who have nothing of greater importance to occupy their time, are disposed to give their attention to a minute care of their physical health. Such a personal solicitude for one's own welfare is likely indeed to react upon the individual harboring it, for over-attention to any physiological function not infrequently results in derangement of it. It is perfectly rational, however, to give careful study to the principles governing health with the view to conforming one's habits of life to the required standard. One may then forget the whole matter, pursue the higher ends of living, and discover that the physical health engendered by right habits ministers in the highest degree to the ends sought.

*Conforming the habits to the standard.*—So in the spiritual life a study of its health laws is rational. Having discovered what they are, there should be

a determined effort to conform the habits of the entire being to the required standard, and the individual will then forget that the highest of all sciences is governing his life in the satisfaction which will come to him in knowing that his life is outworking in conformity to the great plan of the Master, not merely for the redemption of the individual, but also of the whole world.

*Supermen.*—It may be asserted confidently that the individual who will follow this course will develop powers which transcend those of ordinary men. We have looked upon those giants who have wrought great things in the world as supermen created from a different clay, made of a finer fiber than the ordinary soul. But we are beginning to see things with a clearer vision in this generation, and are coming to believe that the powers which characterize these extraordinary individuals are not beyond our understanding, and that in a measure larger life may be within the achievement of all of us.

*Triumphant mediocrity.*—The great word of the day is triumphant mediocrity. It is an age of great constructive achievements, but these are not the product of towering intellectual giants. They are rather brought about by the growing recognition of the duty of thoroughness which has made many a common man take on the attributes of genius, by following his calling with such painstaking faithfulness as to achieve results far beyond what would have been supposed possible.

*A minute obedience.*—These men have studied minutely the laws governing the sphere of life in which they have found themselves moving; and by obeying

to the very letter the detail of the required program they have found that these very laws will crown him king who obeys them. We see the glamor and glory of achievement and join the popular acclaim which greets the successful accomplishment of a great work; we are inclined to glorify the caliber and genius of the one responsible for it, but we often fail to look back over the long trail which he has traveled in reaching the desired end.

*Humdrum details.*—Details are humdrum and tiresome, but they are the little daily submissions of will whereby the wise say "yes" to the command of the Almighty, and they build up the highway which leads to the place of power. No possible drudgery could be more taxing and trivial than the steps in the surgeon's preparation for an aseptic operation—the cleansing of the hands and the finger nails, the use of solutions and countersolutions, the sterilization of towels and instruments. To the one who sees only the annoyance of minute and meticulous care it is maddening, but to the other who realizes that he is obeying universal law, it is a labor of love. And the miraculous achievements of modern surgery have crowned the efforts of him who has been willing to co-operate with the God of law in the alleviation of human suffering.

*Achievements of great souls.*—So also in every great enterprise. A Goethals neglects no slightest detail, and the oceans are joined; a Joffre verifies his plans to the minutest particular, and a great body of troops pushes forward to victory; a Peary scrutinizes in advance every possible contingency of arctic travel, and the North Pole is reached.

*The aftermath of melancholy.*—Running through the experience of many and many a master of detail, there is a vein of sadness. After the great end toward which their energies have been bent has been accomplished, there comes a reaction which seems to bathe in melancholy the years which ought to be rich with the warm gratitude of an enriched world. They sense a certain futility about achievement and the human glory which follows it.

*The cause of dissatisfaction.*—The cause of their dissatisfaction is not far to seek. They have been blind to the larger interests of life. Absorbed in the pursuit of the great end which led them on, they have failed to apply to their own inner life that great principle of obedience to the law of detail. Scrutinizing minutely the principles governing the task which engaged their energies day by day, they have failed to study also the physiology of the inner life and thus by conformity with its laws bring harmony between their outer achievement and inner growth.

*Harmonizing the outer and the inner.*—No happier soul exists in all the universe than he who has synchronized the study and accomplishment of a great task with the fulfilment of the laws of soul-life. The one has reinforced the other, and having interpreted the message of his spirit in the achievement of his life, he may well say, "Lord, now lettest thou

thy servant depart in peace." So also there is an aura of peace which surrounds the life of him who, knowing that he is engaged upon a great task, feels also that the spirit within him, rendering a detailed obedience to the laws of soul-health, waxes strong to nerve and energize him for the outer conflict.

*Laws of the inner life.*—The physiology of the inner life concerns itself with knowing what these laws are, with the upbuilding of a glad, free spirit: digestive organs capable of assimilating God's truth, a musculature strong for the accomplishing of great tasks, a vision that penetrates the secrets of God and the needs of the world, a heart that sustains with its steady throb the burden of a competent life, and a brain that harmonizes every impression from without and brings forth its own original message.

*The soul's satisfaction.*—Thus will there be built up an inner life of strength and power which will not be interrupted by death's transition. Life's continuity, proceeding upon a higher plane and in an environment for which these years have given it perfect fitness, will be concerned with eternity's tasks, which far surpass those of this present life; and with it all will be that deep undercurrent of peace and contentment which can only come from a perfect development in accordance with the laws of the Master of all life. "I shall be satisfied when I awake in His likeness."